



STATE OF CONNECTICUT
EXECUTIVE CHAMBERS

M. JODI RELL
GOVERNOR

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
December 18, 2006

CONTACT: David Dearborn, 860-524-7313
David.dearborn@ct.gov

Governor M. Jodi Rell Orders U.S. and State Flags Lowered to Half Staff in Honor of Staff Sgt. Joseph E. Phaneuf, Jr.

Governor M. Jodi Rell ordered United States and Connecticut flags to be lowered to half staff to honor Connecticut National Guard Staff Sgt. Joseph E. Phaneuf, Jr., of Eastford, who was killed in action Friday in Afghanistan.

Staff Sgt. Phaneuf, 38, died when his armored vehicle struck an improvised explosive device during combat operations. He served with the New Haven-based 102d Infantry Battalion.

"I speak for all Connecticut residents in sending my heartfelt condolences to the family of Staff Sgt. Phaneuf," Governor Rell said. "Joseph Phaneuf was a volunteer citizen-soldier who served his state and country in the truest sense. His example of service and sacrifice is as inspirational as his death is tragic. We need to always remember that fine men and women like Joseph Phaneuf step forward to protect us, regardless of the risk and danger to themselves. I know that Joseph will be honored as a hero of Connecticut and our nation."

Maj. Gen. Thaddeus J. Martin, Adjutant General and commander of the Connecticut National Guard, said, "It is very difficult to lose another great soldier who answered the call to duty. Our thoughts and prayers are with the Phaneuf family and all our service members still on duty in Afghanistan and Iraq."

At the Governor's direction, U.S. and State of Connecticut flags will remain at half staff until Staff Sgt. Phaneuf has been interred. Funeral arrangements have not yet been finalized.

The 102d Infantry Battalion was deployed to Afghanistan in April 2006 and is scheduled to return home in the spring of 2007. Currently, the Connecticut National Guard has 970 soldiers and airmen deployed to Iraq, Afghanistan and Germany in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom.

--30--

